

Senior Focus

LADOA Newsletter , Fall 2007



LADOA

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Message from the General Manager

Comprising nearly half the current work force, Baby Boomers, will continue to have a significant impact on the work force.

As this large portion of the work force moves towards retirement age, employers could be left struggling to find qualified replacements. This problem will only increase since workers in the age group following the boomers will provide an even smaller pool from which to draw.

While surveys suggest that 80% of Boomers expect to continue to work after they reach retirement age, it is also clear that they intend to work in a different way. Often cited as reasons to keep working are staying active and productive and pursuing new challenges, above the need for income.

Employers, then, will have to consider new strategies to encourage older adults to remain in their employment, and to harness the talents of the current and coming generations of retirees. This may include: a willingness to decrease the number of hours worked; changing the duties of a job; offering telecommuting; pursuing phased retirement policies; reconsidering pension plans that penalize older employees for remaining at work; and exploring innovative ways to avoid career stagnation for long-tenured employees near retirement age.

Clearly there are many advantages to employing older workers, such as their skills, experience, loyalty and dependability. Additionally, statistics have shown that an increase in employee age has no direct salary cost increases on an economy-wide basis.

There is, however, reluctance by some employers in hiring older adults. This often stems from concerns over skill obsolescence. As advancements in technology continue, it will be imperative that employers implement job-specific retraining to keep *all* workers, regardless of age, abreast of developments in technologies and continuingly productive in their work. There is no evidence that suggests older adults are any less capable of learning new technologies than their younger counterparts.

LADOA actively supports employing older adults through the Senior Community Employment Service Program (SCSEP). This provides older adults with the opportunity to gain marketable skills, through work-based training, for which they earn a stipend.

Upon completion of their training program, it is hoped that participants will have gained the self-confidence and skills necessary to successfully apply for a paid position in the competitive job market.

In the year ending June 30, 2007, participated in the SCSEP, providing more than hours of community service during their job training.

Laura Trejo

Evidence-Based Practice

The California State Department of Aging and Department of Health have been awarded a three-year grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging: *Empowering Older People to Take More Control of their Health through Evidence-Based Prevention Programs*.

The goal of this initiative is to bring evidence-based, self-management programs into the practice of age-based organizations and service providers including MPCs, senior housing and faith-based communities.

Los Angeles County was one of the first in the state to begin this initiative.

What are evidence-based practice and replication of promising practices?

Evidence-based practice refers to the use of services and programs that are based on rigorous research and findings. This varies from *Replicating Promising Practices* which refers to implementing initiatives that have not been rigorously evaluated but seem worthy of duplicating in other settings.

Los Angeles has received funding for four evidence-based prevention initiatives:

A Matter of Balance
Medication Management
Healthy Moves
and
Healthier Living



A Matter of Balance

The consequence of older adults losing their balance and falling are enormous, with more than 1.8 million hospital visits each year and a staggering \$19 billion in medical costs due to hip fractures, head trauma and other related injuries.

The fear of falling can severely restrict an older adult's activities, and *A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls* workshops have been developed to provide practical strategies for coping with this fear.

The workshop is divided into eight sessions and covers important coping mechanisms, including:

- Controlling the fear of falls
- Setting realistic goals for increasing activity
- Changing the environment to reduce fall risk factors
- Promoting exercise to increase strength and balance

Master Trainers teach the *Matter of Balance* curriculum to lay leaders, who then conduct the workshops.

To date, three Master Trainers and 41 lay coaches are involved in the program, and more than 100 older adults have completed the workshop. Most participants in the workshops have found it very beneficial.

Community-Based Medication Management

The Partners in Care Foundation *Medication Management Improvement System* (MMIS) is an evidence-based intervention specifically designed to enable social worker and nurse care managers to identify and resolve certain medication problems common among frail elders living in the community.

MMIS was successfully piloted in three Southern California Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) sites, which serve functionally impaired clients that are deemed to need a nursing home level of care.

These dually Medicare and Medicaid-eligible clients, whose average age was 80, were provided with services to enable them to continue living safely at home. The results were significant, with 49% of the 615 clients screened, being determined to have at least one potential problem. Three months later, 60% of the medications, identified as problematic, had been changed.

As a result of the success of this pilot, two care management sites, AltaMed Health services in East Los Angeles and Senior Care Action Network in Long Beach have started screening clients for medication problems.



Healthy Moves

In the past year, 261 high-risk seniors have enrolled for the *Healthy Moves* program.

The program is an in-home physical activity intervention, designed to enhance the activity levels of frail, high-risk, sedentary seniors living in their own homes.

The model was developed for community-based care management programs, who deliver services to seniors in their homes.

The program focuses on maintaining health status and quality of life, and promotes two levels of exercise: chairbound and advanced exercise.



Healthy Moves has the potential to be effectively adapted by any agency that serves the senior population in the home, and can also be used in adult day health care centers, senior housing sites, meals on wheels programs and health maintenance plans.

Healthier Living

Healthier Living is a lay-led education program for participants experiencing chronic health problems, and their family, friends and caregivers.

The program's main goal is to improve participant self-confidence in maintaining their health and managing their condition, by providing information and teaching practical skills for coping with chronic conditions such as hypertension, arthritis, heart disease, stroke, lung disease and diabetes.

So far, 65 lay leaders provide workshops in English and Spanish at 20 sites throughout the City, and more than 350 seniors have participated.

Finding new venues and recruiting participants for the *Healthier Living* workshops has proven challenging, as has the fact that some lay leaders, who themselves suffer from chronic conditions, become ill and unable to conduct the workshops.

Senior Community Service Employment Program

SCSEP: Successfully placing older adults in the competitive job market

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) began as part of the War on Poverty 40 years ago, and was so successful that it became a national program under Title V of the Older Americans Act in 1973.

SCSEP participants are paid a stipend of minimum wage, while they gain marketable job skills, by training 20 hours per week in non-profit and public organizations, including senior centers, schools, and libraries.

A partnership with the SCSEP Program can help your agency with its daily operations, while providing a senior with a valuable training opportunity, which will help them to extend their reach and capabilities, develop marketable job skills, and increase their self-confidence and self-worth.

Many agencies find their SCSEP participants so successful that they hire them as employees, upon completion of their training program.

Who Qualifies?

Participants: Unemployed adults, aged 55+, who are residents of the City of Los Angeles and are within federal low-income guidelines, are eligible to participate in the program.

Host organizations: Non-profit community service organizations and government agencies.



Interested in hosting an
SCSEP Participant?

Call the Senior Employment
Program Division at LADOA:
(213) 252-4000

A minister, and retired school teacher, Douglas Patterson participated in the SCSEP prior to being employed at LADOA .

Regarding the program, Mr. Patterson said “ The SCSEP definitely broadened my perspective and my ability to make sense of being a senior.”



He went on to add “A great percentage of seniors are left to feel all alone. But SCSEP proves that loneliness doesn't have to be a mandate for growing older. SCSEP has a shoe to fit every foot. If it is health, wealth, and even friends of your choosing, you can accomplish it with SCSEP.”

Why Hire an Older Adult Worker?

Helping SCSEP Participants Transition to Paid Employment

As many employers have found, hiring an older adult worker can save time and money in training, and has a wealth of other advantages:

- Many older adults have established work skills, experience and ethics
- Absenteeism and turnover rates are significantly lower in workers aged 55 and older
- Older adults are excellent role models with their maturity, sound judgment and strong sense of responsibility
- They are less likely to be involved in work-related accidents

Helping Employers to Recruit Older Workers

Employers can save time and money in recruiting for a vacancy within their company, by letting LADOA assist them in employing an older adult, who is currently participating in the SCSEP.

LADOA's dedicated staff can work with companies to fill their vacancies, by identifying and referring a suitable and qualified candidate for interview.

For more information, please call LADOA and ask for the Senior Employment Program Division:

(213) 252-4000

Following restructuring at the Good Samaritan Hospital, Henry McIntyre, an auditor and department head, found himself out of work at the age of 58.

As an older adult, Henry experienced difficulties in finding a suitable job.



He joined a number of job clubs, prior to participating in the SCSEP, which would, ultimately, result in him gaining full-time employment as an auditor at LADOA, where he has worked for 19 years.

Henry encourages older adults who are looking to enter the job market to participate in SCSEP for the opportunities it provides to improve self-confidence and gain new skills, and to network and explore job opportunities.

Employers that have recently hired SCSEP participants, include:

Advantage Service Group
Assistance League of So. California
City of Los Angeles
Goodwill
Independent Living Center
Inter Tech
L.A. Child Care Development Council
L.A.U.S.D.
Marriott
New Horizons
Nikkei Village
SFV Interfaith Council
Vons
Wal Mart
Wilshire Language School

Best Practice; Service Providers in Profile

M.A.O.F.

Mexican American Opportunity Foundation

M.A.O.F. is a non-profit, community-based organization that was established in 1963 in order to serve disadvantaged individuals and families in the Los Angeles area. M.A.O.F. is the largest Latino-oriented, family services organization in the United States, and has achieved this status by providing high quality social services and programs to those communities where the need is the greatest.

M.A.O.F.'s services for seniors include:

Senior Hispanic Information and Assistance Program (SHIAS)

Supported and funded by LADOA, this program provides information and assistance services to seniors throughout Los Angeles. Topic areas include health, transportation, housing, employment, immigration and naturalization, nutrition and document preparation assistance.



Volunteers from M.A.O.F. assist LADOA staff with outreach

One of the innovative ways that M.A.O.F performs outreach is a model they have developed to form relationships with other organizations and agencies in the community, who have a high volume of older adult service users. Once relationships are formed, information and assistance staff from M.A.O.F. are stationed at their locations, to provide help to their older adult clients, for example, at Boyle Heights and Van Nuys Social Security Offices, where they assist in the provision of bilingual translation services.

M.A.O.F. have been so successful in their relationship building with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (U.S.C.I.S.) that, together, they have developed a pilot project that will assist seniors in accessing these important government services.

Previously, seniors, in the process of U.S. immigration, have had to travel to downtown L.A., where they have experienced lengthy waits of many hours, standing in long lines, to complete the necessary procedures. This has proven very difficult for seniors without transportation, those unable to stand for any length of time, and those with limited or no English.

M.A.O.F.'s exciting, new collaboration will now see U.S.C.I.S. officers visiting M.A.O.F., on a monthly basis, to provide citizenship and immigration services directly to seniors.

For more information about M.A.O.F.'s senior services, contact:

Elizabeth Jimenez, Program Director
972 S. Goodrich Boulevard, Commerce CA 90022
Tel: (323) 313-1605 E-mail: ejimenez@maof.org

Promoting Healthy Aging

As part of LADOA's ongoing promotion of healthy aging, there are three events scheduled for the San Fernando Valley in the Fall:

Aging in Place: Promoting Independent Living

October 20, 2007

Warner Center Marriott, Woodland Hills

Contact: Rosario Isip: (213) 252-3306

Exhibitors will be on hand to provide useful information and advice on how older adults can retain their independence and remain in their own homes as long as possible. Topics covered will include: identity theft; reverse mortgages; long-term care insurance; finding suitable in-home service providers; fall prevention and demonstrations of exercise routines.



Senior Balance Fair - Increasing Stability, Agility and Movement

To be held in November, 2007

Wilkinson MPC, 8956 Vanalden Avenue, Northridge

Contact: Veronica Sanchez-Perez: (213) 252-4097

Featuring prevention and supportive services presentations from physical therapists, podiatrists and other professionals, demonstrations of exercise routines from the *Silver Sneakers*, and balance assessments.



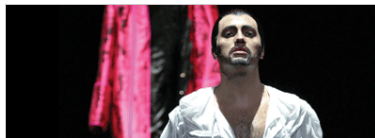
Festival of Fitness – Motivating older adults to sustain active lifestyles

To be held in December, 2007

Cal State University, Northridge

Contact: Helen Lee: (213) 252-3305

Older adults will be able to explore health and fitness resources available in the community, and have the opportunity to try fun exercises and activities that will help them improve their well-being.



Los Angeles Opera Presents Don Giovanni

In November, some 1,000 senior opera lovers, from throughout L.A. County, will have the opportunity to attend the final dress rehearsal for L.A. Opera's *Don Giovanni* at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

Each season, the Opera's community education and outreach senior program selects senior centers to participate, through a competitive application process; allocating up to 40 free tickets per center.

For more information on participating in L.A. opera's senior program, contact:

Veronica Lopez
Community Programs Coordinator, L.A. Opera
(213) 972-8016

Focus on: Energy Efficiency

LADWP Refrigerator Exchange Program

In addition to distributing energy efficient light bulbs and providing electric fans to older adults in need, another LADOA and LADWP collaboration is the Refrigerator Exchange Program, which offers qualifying Low Income and Lifeline customers an opportunity to exchange their old refrigerator for an energy efficient unit.

To qualify:

- ◆ The customer must be a current participant in the LADWP residential Low Income Discount Rate or Lifeline Programs
- ◆ The customer's refrigerator must be at least 10 years old and 14 cubic feet in volume.
- ◆ The outlet to which the refrigerator is connected must be grounded (3 prong)

Launched by Mayor Villaraigosa earlier this year, the program will provide 50,000 new refrigerators to qualifying participants in the City, saving each of them \$1,000 in their utility bills alone, during the lifetime of their new refrigerator.

For more information,

go to

LADWP's website:

www.ladwp.com

or call:

1-800-342-5397

The Centenarian Program

Do you know a resident of the City of Los Angeles who will soon be joining the ranks of the more than 50,000 centenarians in the U.S.?

The City of Los Angeles would like to honor the wealth of experience and longevity of venerable centenarians by bestowing certificates upon them in celebration of their 100th birthday.

For an application form, or more information, please contact LADOA at:

www.lacity.org/doa/download.htm

or

(213) 252-4000

